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varieties published as pamphlet brochures or as short papers in journals difficult or impossible of general access, as, for example, in such out-of-the-way places, from the standpoint of scientific literature, as Chile, Brazil, Jamaica, or Trinidad, are a positive detriment to science, because very few will ever be able to consult the original descriptions and very possibly the author himself often fails to receive a copy of them. This is all bad enough, but much worse is the use for publication of new species, or new facts and notes, of local daily or weekly journals of all sorts, such as *The Jamaica Post*, *Tri-Weekly Budget*, *Daily Gleaner*, *California Fruit Grower*, *Rio Grande Republican*, *Southwestern Farm and Orchard*, *Manhattan Kansas Industrialist*, *California State Board of Horticulture*, etc. In one number of the *California Fruit Grower*, for example, and none of the titles given are fanciful, no less than seven new species of scale insects are indicated, including *crawii* and *greenii*, noted above, and this as late as 1897.

This matter has been gone into perhaps already fully enough, and in fact the writer regrets the apparent necessity of continuing the discussion, hoping as he did that his first article would serve the needs of the case. If any 'running amuck' has been done, it is in the hasty publication of half-digested studies, as illustrated by the consideration of the single species given above.

C. L. MARLATT.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

#### THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY.

THE first regular meeting of this latest comer in the brotherhood of societies was held at Columbia University, Saturday, October 28th. A preliminary meeting in June elected officers and decided some details.

It is proposed to hold four meetings annually, simultaneously with the American Mathematical Society, which also meets at Columbia University. It is hoped that the two societies will coöperate and benefit each other. At the same time the new society is pledged to coöperate with Section B of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

On Saturday last the mathematicians adjourned to hear the opening address by the

President, Professor H. A. Rowland, who handled the great questions which confront the physicist of to-day in a most interesting manner and elicited frequent applause.

After business discussion several papers were presented.

Professor Rowland described experiments which failed to demonstrate an 'ether-wind' or a movement of the ether with moving matter, which would be of extreme interest if found.

Professor Pupin showed a method of rectifying alternating currents by an electrolytic cell and battery.

Professor Webster gave a semi-popular illustration of the propagation of an electromagnetic wave in the ether, and deduced the formulæ. He also showed and explained a curve-tracing top.

The meeting was eminently encouraging. Some thirty or forty working physicists were gathered together, representing fifteen or sixteen leading universities and colleges, and all seemed agreed that the new society was needed and would be a success.

The next meeting will be held at Columbia University between Christmas and New Year.

The present officers are: H. A. Rowland, president; A. A. Michelson, vice-president; Ernest Merritt, secretary; W. Hallock, Treasurer.

W. H.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

BY the will of the late Judge Charles P. Daly, the American Geographical Society, New York, receives \$5,000 for the founding of a medal to be given for distinguished geographical services.

A PRELIMINARY meeting of the members and fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science resident in or near New York City was held at Columbia University on October 24th, to make preliminary arrangements for the meeting of the Association to be held in New York during the last week in June, 1900. The business transacted included the election of an executive committee as follows: Professor J. J. Stevenson, Chairman, Professor J. McK. Cattell, secretary, Mr. Geo. F. Kunz, treasurer, Professor H. F. Osborn (entertainment), Professor N. L. Britton (excursions), Mr. C. F. Cox (transportation), and the general